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SHERMAN AND GRAYSON COUNTY.

SHERMAN IS LOCATED ON AN eminence, not the highest in the county, but sufficiently so for perfect drainage, and has a population of from 3,500 to 5,000. The town, although located and named in 1846, is newly built up, with little regard to regularity in size, height, or style of houses. But few brick and no stone houses have as yet been built, although plenty of brick and building rock are both convenient and cheap—the first manufactured and the latter dug from the ground at shallow depth in and around the town. Wooden houses are going up in such numbers as to surpass all belief. Brick houses are the coming style—several are going up and many are contracted for and in contemplation. The streets are busy, and the "stir and bustle" would rather remind you of some great metropolis than a frontier city.

All the businesses, trades and professions and different national and "state" cities of people are well represented here, at least in numbers. The bar, billiard, eating saloon and millinery businesses take the lead in numbers. The dry goods, grocery, hardware and other trades are well supplied. The gambler and another "fast tribe," are rather overdoing their business in numbers, as well as their acts of boldness. We have no law licensing either as is supposed there, and the courts are after them "right and left."

The town is well supplied with good school houses—will soon be with churches built or to be built.

Society is by no means settled. The people are all "new comers," and have such extremely different manners, habits and ways, that it will take time to regulate it.

We have railroad communication, with Galveston, 370 miles on the south, by the Texas Central, and with St. Louis, 632 miles on the north, by the Missouri, Kansas and Texas. The iron will commence to be laid on the Trans-Continental east, in a few days. Many other charters, starting from this point, with land subsidies sufficient to build them, were granted by the Legislature just adjourned, which will certainly make this the great town of Northern Texas. The prospect makes city as well as country property rather high, as compared to points where the advantages referred to, are not expected. Housekeeping is troublesome on account of the scarcity of servants. Cooks get from \$8 to \$20 per month. Men servants get from \$150 to \$240 per annum. Barbers are more plentiful, cheaper and vastly superior to those there. Our beef and mutton can't be beat. Good board and lodging, thirty dollars per month. We have two weekly and one daily and weekly papers. The daily and weekly and one weekly are Democratic, and the other Republican, and all seem to be doing well. The town and county are Democratic.

We have a good many colored people, but they are as a general rule, an indolent, worthless set, and want to do "job work" just enough to live on and loaf the balance of the time.

GRAYSON COUNTY, TEXAS,

Was created in 1856, and has an area of 960 square miles. It was named in honor of Peter W. Grayson, a prominent man in the days of the Texas Republic. Sherman is the county seat and was named for Sidney Sherman who was also a prominent man in Mr. Grayson's day. It has the Red River and Indian Territory on the North, is from thirty to forty miles square, with a population of about twenty thousand and \$4,000,000 taxable property, and contains as great a variety of products (or climates) perhaps as any country in the Southern States. Any kind of soil of the black kind can be found from a "black wax" equal in stickiness but qualities to Georgia in far to the black sandy in must not quite so bad as the black wax, either of which in common parlance here "does not amount to much," but to a man from the sandy region of Southwestern Georgia they are almost intolerable. The simple truth is, a man from that country could only be made to believe what amount of mud and how sticky it is, one rain will bring to the surface. In this country by seeing it, he can only fully realize what it is by getting "stuck" in it, but there is no bottom to the soil or end to its productiveness; none better, I venture to say, anywhere.

The average crop of corn is from 40 to 60 bushels, of wheat from 20 to 40 bushels of oats from 50 to 60 bushels, and of cotton from two-thirds to one 200-lb bale to the acre, all dependent on soil and seasons. Weet it sells at from \$1 to \$2, corn from 15 cents to \$1, oats from 25 to 50 cents per bushel, and cotton from 1 to 2 cents cheaper than there. Plenty of good hay is cut from the prairie, which sells from 1 to 2 cents per lb. One hand cultivates twenty acres, but I imagine with your system of labor fifteen acres would be sufficient. Field labor is scarce and in great demand. Good hands get \$20 per month with board. Employers are prompt, too, in their payments, but the work is heavy and hard. The great rapidity with which weeds and grass grow in this county requires prompt attention on the part of farmers. Corn and cotton are planted and cultivated in the usual tedious way. Wheat and oats are planted and gathered with machinery, with but little trouble or expense to the farmer after he has once invested in fixing it. The wood portion of the county produces walnut, pecan, grapes, haws, plums and sweet crab apples; the uncultivated prairie, wild strawberries in abundance. None of these are turned to either good or profitable account, except the grapes for wine, apples for jelly and preserves, and strawberries for desert. All the cultivated fruits that you have in Georgia grow equally as well if not better here than there. The timber—what there is of it—is scrubby, not half the size or height or adaptability to the farmer's use of that in Georgia. About one-fifth of the land is in cultivation. None but the prairie land is attempted to be cultivated, and the prairie in.

cludes or covers about eight-tenths of the country.

To bring land into cultivation requires a mammoth turning plow, drawn generally by five yokes of oxen, with one head to the plow and one to drive. This turning of the prairie soil must be done a season before cultivation, and costs from \$3 to \$1 per acre done by men who follow it as a business. Rails are brought and hauled from one to twenty and thirty miles, according to the distance of the farm from the timber, and cost from \$3 to \$1.50 a hundred. The cost of bringing prairie land into a proper state for cultivation, including fencing, is from \$5 to \$8 per acre, and depends very much upon the number of fences that can be "joined to" and the distance the rails are to be hauled for a cheap or expensive fence.

The face of the country is rather broken in some places. Parts of it are as much so as Middle Georgia, and cut up equally as badly with branches and small creeks, almost all of which go dry in the summer and fall. Other parts are beautifully level, just undulating enough for drainage, allowing you to see houses from six to twelve miles.

"Range stock"—horses, mules, and cattle—make out to get through the winter but in the summer they do splendidly. Oxen work all the summer and fat on beef (many of them fat enough now) without any feed but what they get grazing at night and rest times. Mules work their horses with the same feed only; stock will *work and fatten on grass here.*

"Stock" horses and mules sell, according to the season and kind, from \$20 to \$30 per head ground. "Stock" cattle, with the same conditions as to season and kind, at from five to eight dollars per head. They are much larger and finer than Georgia cattle. The cattle and horse raising business is considered profitable by those who follow it, though it is certainly attended with a great many hardships and privations, which are stated most easily by saying that the stock raiser deprives himself of every luxury and comfort—all society and everything else that would make him comfortable and happy, or intelligent. Land in our county is rather high compared to either that further from the railroad or the frontier; but the purchaser is to some extent compensated for his extra outlay in land in being near railroads, mills, good markets, schools, churches, etc. The price of land, including improved and unimproved, in this county, reaches from two to fifty dollars per acre, which is regulated entirely by its location, richness, proximity to market, and other local advantages.

The cost of building is enormous. Most of the lumber used in building in this part of the State is shipped either from Chicago or Florida, and sells, delivered here, at from forty to sixty dollars per thousand. The result of these high prices is that but very few fine houses are built, either in the country or in town. Most of the country houses are miserable little huts, built after the Indian style, nothing like the roomy, comfortable and good as the houses built in your usual climate for servants.

When the Trans-Continental Railroad is completed east from here to the great pineries of Eastern Texas, which will be before the first of January next, lumber of course will drop down to reasonable figures, and the people will no longer build better houses and live more comfortably. A great many farmers have no sort of shelter for their horses or any other kind of stock, while many others have pens covered with straw or hay, and a few who are able have shelters of plank or boards. Many now concern

themselves with finding the scarcity of and extra high prices demanded for building material, and perhaps, not being blessed with sufficient lands, live in tents, either awaiting lower prices or until they can work out means to build with. As a substitute for lots, long lines tied to stakes driven in the ground, on the grass, are used. This not only secures your horses or mules, but by frequent moves or changes of base gives an abundant use of fresh grass, which is generally a substitute for all kinds of feed.

We have a rainy and a dry season, either one of which is pretty severe on its "line of conduct." Generally from the first of June to about the first of January (of course the time varies) is the dry season, during which time, as a general rule, little or no rain at all falls. The balance of the year is the wet season, and it rains almost "without ceasing."

It is practically "one extreme following another." Since my arrival, about a month ago, we have had a great many rain, wind, and thunder storms, and in some unfortunate localities hail sufficient to beat wheat, corn, oats, and cotton into the mud—enough to beat every leaf or sign of a leaf from the trees—much to make outsiders look like they had been between two armies in a hard fought battle, breaking and bruising all, and killing some of the trees. The wind in these storms blows hard, but "that does not amount to much." The lightning is one continual flash or blaze; but, strange, it does not come downward like these, except occasionally. Some people might say these were magnificent, grand sights; but I beg to be excused when they are on hand.

If these storms came at night it is fashionable to get up and dress. I have never been very heavy on fashion, but this is one I found no difficulty in adopting. The dry season is not without its faults either. In summer of course it will be hot, dry, and dusty, and in the winter frequent "norther." With the "norther" I have no experience. The old settlers say "they do not amount to much;" but those who come in later, and whom I am inclined to believe, tell me they are all the people out there think they are. First the wind blows almost a gale from the northwest, and the temperature changes from pleasant to freezing in a few minutes! All this may "not amount to much" to those used to it; but how will it be with a thin blooded Southwestern Georgian? The extremes of heat and cold are about as Tallahassee in summer and Chicago in winter.

But, say what you will or hear what you may of this country, no one who has seen it, with the knowledge of the *past and progress* of the Northwestern States staring him in the face (which, to say the least, have a much worse climate, with every other fault, much worse than can be alleged against Northern Texas), can help but admit that the prospects of this State for a bright, great and glorious future are now *sealed and assured* beyond all reasonable and probable doubt. The prospect, to my mind, is so bright, that it resolves itself into a *fact already settled*. People are leaving the Northwestern States and coming here in great numbers, and they all say this State is a *paradise* compared to theirs. Farming here is both easy (on account of the shortness of the time crops are required to be worked) and remunerative. Go where you may and talk to the farmer, and he will *invariably* tell you he makes money. Now what is to prevent this land, in a few short years, from commanding as good, yes, better prices, than the Northern and Northwestern lands, which range from \$30 to \$150 per acre?

The water here is bad—as bad as your rotten lime—unless saved in cisterns, which, owing to

the porous, rotten soil, are much more expensive and troublesome than with you. Water from a good cistern properly constructed is a luxury that but few of the Texas people indulge in. Although the weather at times gets intensely hot in the day, the nights are a delightfully pleasant, and the sleeping most comfortable, refreshing, and invigorating—while, with good water and a pure atmosphere, would certainly make this a very healthy climate. Northern Texas, and this country especially, is said to be healthy, but, in my judgment, he who escapes bilious fever, chills, and the like, in this country will be most fortunate. Those who have lived here for some time admit as much; but, at the same time, they will tell you "they don't amount to much," which, by the way, is a favorite expression out here when they wish to "cover faults that can't be concealed."

The laws of this State are not only much more strict and certain in their punishment, but are twice as rigidly enforced as in Georgia. Crime, it is true, is of a little (but very little) more frequent occurrence here than there; but this is accounted for by the fact that many desperadoes, outlaws, and others, charged with crime in the older States, seek refuge in this. But when a man does get one of these fellows up, and "de-fident" inquiry is made for them, "condign" punishment is speedily meted out to him. The criminal pleading here is as loose and simple as the Georgia "John Jones" civil pleading, which, with the disposition of the courts and juries to put down crime, gives a guilty defendant little or no chance to escape his just punishment, however able his counsel or great their effort may be.

Professional and other men, whose business keeps them in-doors, would to a greater or less extent avoid and keep out of the unpleasant and objectionable points to the country, but, let me tell you, when you come out to run an in-door business, let it be what it may, you will find competition unheard of and unimagined of in Georgia, at least in numbers. That kind swarm here like the locusts "we read of." The supply has already run clear away with the demand, and will be amply sufficient for at least this generation. But all these things, when the country settles up, and the people have time to judge of and appreciate true merit, will go to those who deserve

success in what they undertake. And all these in-door businesses here are perhaps as well, or better, patronized than in Georgia, and will necessarily improve, as the country settles up, and do as well, for generations to come. The prospects of my firm are hopeful, in fact, *flattering*. If we can be healthy this will be our future home, but, if this climate breeds bilious fever, chills, and the like, so as to make it unhealthy, in the sense the word is used in Georgia, then "neither money or name would be any inducement to remain." I would rather plow a no-horned ox on the poor hills of Middle Georgia, and be healthy, than to be Governor of Texas without health.

Game, such as deer, turkey, prairie chicken, squirrels, partridges, and doves (with a good chance of fish in the spring and early summer), is rather plentiful. Those who are fond of hunting make up parties and go across the river into the Indian Nation, where the sport is free, and "camp hunt."

In conclusion then, "upon a calm survey of all the surroundings," this country, relieved of its faults, without more, would be the best in the known world. With all its faults it is much above the average. The man though who comes to it with the expectation or slightest hope of getting rich, or even making a decent living, without lively, active effort, with many privations, difficulties, and hardships not dreamed of there, will be sadly mistaken, and fall into the "well set trap" of the returned Georgian.

A man who has a good home there, is healthy, and doing well, will, nine times out of ten, regret a move to a new country. He will certainly be thrown into troubles, society, and hardships; he is nauseated, but which will improve and be removed as the country gets older. The greatest difficulty there; is the lack of judgment to direct and utilize and economy to husband what might be good results. Northern and Western men get rich on less incomes than your people are driven into bankruptcy on. Away, then, with false pride; realize your condition, and many, very many, "emigration fevers" will be cured. But when a move is necessary, which often happens, this country is at least well worth looking at; and when you get here you will find that I have not over-estimated its advantages or under-estimated its disadvantages.